

# Literary Devices



DEVICE = ANY LITERARY TECHNIQUE USED TO ACHIEVE A SPECIFIC EFFECT

## Allusion

A reference to a LITERARY, MYTHOLOGICAL, OR HISTORICAL person, place or thing.

## Irony

A contrast between appearance and reality—usually one in which reality is the opposite from what it seems; when one thing is expected to happen or be, and the exact opposite occurs

## Symbol

The use of any object, person, place or action that both has a meaning in itself and that stands for something larger than itself, such as a quality, attitude, belief or value

## Foreshadowing

The use in a literary work of clues that suggest events that have yet to occur.

## Epiphany

an event in which the essential nature of something—a person, a situation, an object—is suddenly understood in a new way; a sudden realization; an “ah ha!” moment

## Detail

facts revealed by the author or speaker that support the attitude or tone in the work

## Suspense

The quality of a literary work that makes the reader uncertain or tense about the outcome of events.

## Motif

A recurrent element in a literary work.  
A pattern or strand of imagery or symbolism in a work of literature

## Archetype

a type of character, action, or situation that occurs over and over in literature; a pattern or example that occurs in literature and life

## Tone

The writer's attitude toward his or her subject. Tone can often be described by a single adjective

## Theme

A central message or insight into life revealed through the literary work. A lesson about life or people.

## Point Of View

The perspective from which a story is told.

## Mood

The feeling created in the reader by a literary work or passage.

## Repetition

A device in which words, sounds, and/or ideas are used more than once to enhance rhythm and to create emphasis.

## Setting

The time and place of the action of a literary work